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ABSTRACT

This Child Development Associate (CDA) module, the eleventh in a series of 16, accents the important role that parents play in the education of their children. Designed for bilingual/bicultural preschool teacher trainees, the module contains a brief introduction stressing the importance of the parent-child relationship and provides guidelines for involving parents in their child's learning at home and in school. Several suggestions for working with parents are made. Guides for parents who conduct home learning activities are offered. Emphasis is placed on talking with and listening to children, reading and telling stories, and the use of ordinary household objects to develop cognitive, conceptual and motor skills. The final sections of the module focus on nutrition and health. Minimum daily required nutrients are listed and a table of ethnic food composition is provided. Signs of illness which teachers and parents should recognize are indicated and the importance of immunization is pointed out. This module focuses on specific behaviors that directly relate to CDA Competencies 1 and 5. (RH)

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TEACHERS PLANNING AND WORKING WITH PARENTS FROM
A BILINGUAL-MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

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Bilingual/Bicultural
Child Development Associate
Pilot Project

MODULE XI

Our Lady of the Lake University of San Antonio
San Antonio, Texas

PS 010537

TEACHERS
PLANNING AND WORKING
WITH PARENTS
FROM A
BILINGUAL-MULTICULTURAL
COMMUNITY

Joyce H. Coleman

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P R E F A C E

The world in which we live has become so complex and knowledge has expanded so rapidly that the education of our children has become increasingly more difficult. In order for our children to cope effectively with the demands being made upon them, both parents and educators must be actively involved in the education process. From the beginning of life, how and what parents teach, forms the child's foundation for formal learning. Parents must recognize and accept this responsibility. The success of formal learning, which typically is the educators domain, can be enhanced through parent participation. Teachers must recognize and accept this fact. Working together as a team, parents and teachers can greatly enhance the education of our children and thereby enrich the lives of our children.

This module, "Teachers Planning and Working With Parents From A Bilingual-Multicultural Community," was developed to provide teachers with information and resource material which would help them learn how to work as a team with the parents of the children in their classroom. Just as parents are often not taught how to be parents, teachers are often not taught how to work with parents. Parents are a necessary and a vital source that, experience and research have shown, can be used successfully and effectively in many aspects of the educational process. This module was designed specifically for Headstart and Day Care teachers who participated in a Bilingual/Bicultural Child Development Associate Pilot Training Project at Our Lady of the Lake University of San Antonio, but its content is appropriate for any bilingual/bicultural pre-school setting.

While the content of this module is designed for individualized or self-paced usage, it is strongly recommended that this module be used in conjunction with academic instruction and on-site instruction. The kinds of interactions that

occur in group discussions during academic instruction and on-site instruction, among instructors and other teachers provide the motivation, reinforcement and intellectual stimulation that is needed by the teacher. The academic instructors and trainers who developed and tested this module found that learning was facilitated when the module was used as a part of the academic instruction and on-site instruction.

Entry skills needed by trainees to use this module successfully are...

1. The ability to read and comprehend English at the eighth grade level.
2. The ability to follow written instructions.
3. An awareness of how young children develop.
4. An awareness of significant areas of child development (motor, social, language, cognitive, self-help).
5. An understanding of the cultures of the children and the community.
6. An ability to communicate effectively with parents.
7. Sensitivity to the strengths and needs of parents.

This module focuses on specific behaviors that directly relate to:

COMPETENCE I.- Set Up and Maintain A Safe and Healthy Learning Environment

Functional Area: Health

COMPETENCE V.- Bring About Optimal Coordination of Home and Center Child-Rearing Practices and Expectations.

Functional Area: Home-Center

This module is eleventh in the recommended sequence of usage. The sequence of the modules is a result of the identified critical needs of the CDA trainees in the Bilingual/Bicultural CDA Pilot Training Project at Our Lady of the Lake University. The competencies in the modules were addressed in priority, taking into account the critical needs necessary for effective teaching. The sequence has been tested with other groups of teachers and seems to also be effective.

The recommended sequence of usage of the modules is:

- Module I Learning to Observe Young Children in a Bilingual-Multicultural Environment
- Module II Getting To Know and Like Myself Better
- Module III Planning Effectively for Young Children in a Bilingual-Multicultural Environment
- Module IV Creating a Bilingual-Bicultural Learning Environment for Young Children
- Module V Helping Young Children Develop Social Skills in a Bilingual-Multicultural Environment
- Module VI Helping Young Children Develop Motor Skills in a Bilingual-Multicultural Environment
- Module VII Helping Young Children Develop Language Skills in a Bilingual-Multicultural Environment
- Module VIII Helping Young Children Develop Cognitive Skills in a Bilingual-Multicultural Environment
- Module IX Helping Young Children Develop Self-Help Skills in a Bilingual-Multicultural Environment
- Module X Setting the Stage for Effective Learning in a Bilingual-Multicultural Environment
- Module XI Teachers Planning and Working With Parents From a Bilingual-Multicultural Community
- Module XII Juegos - Cuentos - Cantos - Y - Rimas
- Module XIII Artesanias Mexico - Americanas
- Module XIV Teaching Concepts to Young Children Through Cultural Cooking Experiences
- Module XV Supplementary Administrative Responsibilities of Staff Working in a Bilingual-Multicultural Environment
- Module XVI Helping Young Children Develop a Positive Self-Concept

The competencies that a trainer, academic instructor or group facilitator need to use this module effectively with bilingual/bicultural trainees are as follows:

1. Knowledge of early childhood growth and development.
2. Experience teaching pre-school children.
3. Experience working with parents.
4. First-hand knowledge of the cultures of the children and the community where the teachers work.
5. The ability to speak Spanish and English.
6. The ability to explain and demonstrate the content in a manner compatible with the learning styles of the trainees.
7. Experience teaching adults.

P R E - T E S T

1. List and explain five aspects of a parent-child relationship that have a profound effect upon the child's development.
2. Explain why parent involvement and parent education are a necessary part of pre-school education.
3. List and explain at least six guidelines or principles that will help a teacher develop skills in working with parents.
4. Outline a parent involvement program that a pre-school teacher could use for involving the parents in the classroom activities.

GLOSSARY

An understanding of these words will help you to better understand the content of this module.

Carbohydrates -- a nutrient that provides energy for body functions and muscular movements. Assist in digestion and assimilation of foods.

Fats -- a nutrient that provides energy and supplies fatty acids needed for growth, health and smooth skin.

g (gram) -- a measurement of weight equal to about 1/28 ounce.

Immunization -- the substance used to prevent or resist a particular disease.

Interpersonal Skills -- behaviors used in relationships with other persons.

IU (International Unit) -- an international standard of measurement for determining the quantity of a vitamin needed for a particular effect.

mg. (milligram) a measure of weight; 1/1000 of a gram.

Minerals -- inorganic substances; something neither animal or vegetable.

Nutrients -- substances needed by a living thing to maintain life, health and reproduction.

Nutrition -- the results of taking in and utilizing food substances.

Nutritional Deficiency -- having a lack of specific nutrients.

Parenting -- related to the position, function or standing of a parent.

Proteins -- a nutrient that is necessary for growth and development and is a source of heat and energy.

INTRODUCTION

Parents play a significant role in the lives of their children. They are the first and most important teachers children ever have. Because parents are so important to the lives and education of children, they need to be involved in the education of their children.

Parents are people with their own special background of experiences, their own needs, desires, fears, disappointments and frustrations. All of these factors contribute to the way a parent responds to his child. It is important to understand that most parents are doing the very best that they know how for their children. Also, most parents want their children to have good experiences and to do well. How a child develops or behaves is taken very personally by parents because the child is a reflection of themselves. As teachers we are sometimes critical of parent's behavior and sometimes the criticism is justified. But remember! Most parents are doing the best they know how, given the circumstances of their lives.

You may be asking, what if a parent is doing his "best" yet it is not "good" for the child? What should be done? One of the hardest things in life is to be a parent and most parents have not been trained for the role. If you are a parent, who taught you to parent? Chances are you learned it from your parents. Most of us learned to be parents by imitating that which we saw during our growing up years.

As parents we need all of the experience, information and support we can get to help us do a better job of parenting. Many of the parents of the children

in your room need and want to learn more so that they can improve their parenting skills. Many of the parents have skills and knowledge that can be utilized effectively in the classroom and they want to participate in their child's education. One of your jobs as a teacher is to provide information to parents who need it and to provide opportunities for parents to participate more actively in the education of their children both at home and at school. When you do this, you benefit both the parents and child tremendously.

How do you give parents the information they need? How do you get them actively involved in their child's education? What information do parents need to have? How do you effectively utilize parents in the school setting? All of these questions and others will be discussed in this module. It has been designed to help you learn how to work as a team with parents.

UNDERSTANDING PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

The relationship between parent and child is a very special one. The first human attachment that the child makes is with parents, especially the mother, who is usually the primary caregiver. This attachment results from the mother or parent's interactions with the child. Since a newborn baby is completely dependent upon another person for meeting his needs, the person who regularly attends to those needs becomes a very special person. If the parent is loving and warm, an even deeper attachment results.

As a teacher of young children it is important to understand the various aspects of the parent-child relationship because this relationship has a profound effect upon the child's development. Also, you as a teacher have an effect upon the child's relationship with his parents. There are several aspects of the parent-child relationship you should understand.

1. Young children usually perceive their parents as being all knowing; sort of "super" persons. When the child goes to school the teacher becomes a substitute parent. This means that you the teacher inherit the child's feelings about his parents. If you treat the child in such a way that his good feelings about you grow, he will continue to think of adults in a positive way. However, if you treat the child in a way that causes him to have negative feelings, he will project those

feelings to other adults including his parents. So, how you treat a child can affect his feelings about his parents and other adults. It is important to remember this when interacting with the children in your class.

2. From birth on, children learn what their parents teach.

Parents teach their children through everything they do. They teach as they are doing daily tasks. They teach as they take care of the child's physical needs. They teach as they talk to the child, etc. Some teaching is done directly and deliberately. Other teaching is done incidentally when parents are not aware that they are teaching. Children learn many things by watching. As adults we must remember that we communicate many things to children through how we move our body, through attitudes we have, through the many ways that we behave.

Think about your attitudes. Think about how you move around the classroom. Do you make faces when certain things happen that upset you or displease you? Do you mostly wear a smile on your face or a frown? Do you really enjoy being with young children? What kinds of things do you think you are teaching the children through your classroom behavior?

3. Many parents treat their male children different than their female children. In spite of the woman's liberation movement, many cultures still have different expectations for male children and for female children. You will see this reflected in the children's play and

in their reaction to certain activities. Some parents have strong feelings about their male children playing dress-up, playing with dolls, and playing in the housekeeping area. It is not in keeping with their idea of how a little boy should play. Some parents feel that their little girls should not participate in rough outdoor activities. These activities are reserved for little boys. It is important for you to be aware of the parents attitudes and values toward the role of boys and girls. As a teacher you need to respect the parents values and structure your classroom so that what is expected of the children does not conflict with home values. Perhaps you can help the parents understand your feelings about sex roles and together have a better understanding of what should be expected of the children.

4. Children want and need attention and affection from their parents. If a child is given much love and attention by his parents and if he is treated very warmly at home, he will expect the same kind of love and attention from you. If you are not warm and loving to the child, he will be confused and frustrated, because his expectation of you, based upon his experience at home, is that you are supposed to be warm and loving. Children who are not given love and attention at home may either withdraw and be shy with adults or become very aggressive in an attempt to get the attention and love that has not been received. When a child is shy we sometimes overlook him because he is not demanding attention or getting in the way. We fail to realize how much the child really needs love and attention. The child who is aggressive and acts out often becomes so bothersome we do not feel warm or affectionate

toward him, thus causing the child to continue being aggressive because his needs are not being met. As you can see, the kind of relationship that a child has with his parents definitively influences his behavior at school.

5. Where children are in their development depends to a large extent on the kinds of experiences that parents have provided. While children develop at different rates, it is now understood that the kinds of experiences children have early in life play a significant role in how children develop. If parents spend time talking to their children and reading to them, language development is encouraged. If they show them things in the environment, talk about them, and allow children to handle and explore them, this facilitates concept development. If children are encouraged to learn and ask questions this increases motivation and curiosity. If children are shown that problems can be solved, this develops problem solving skills.

When a child enters your classroom he brings to it all of the experiences he has had, the attitudes he has learned, and the skills that he has developed. All of these are directly related to the relationship the child has with his parents. If you understand this, you will better understand each child and be better able to plan for him.

UNDERSTANDING THE NEED FOR PARENT EDUCATION AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT

There are many factors that influence a child's growth and development. One factor of basic importance is parents. Whether we study physical growth, personality patterns, language development, social development, cultural differences or the impact of poverty or affluence a critical variable is the environment parents provide. Much of the research during the last decade shows that the way in which the parent communicates with the child, the amount of experience that is provided, the degree to which the parent gives meaning to what is experienced and how the parent guides the child to develop interpersonal skills all are of primary importance to the child's growth and development. As stated earlier, the way in which the parent teaches has a significant effect on how the child learns to view his experience and to use it. These learnings are not usually taught directly. They usually result from the daily interaction between the parent and the child.

Skillful teachers understand children's vast potential for learning. They also understand how children learn. Skillful teachers find providing a stimulating environment and guiding children's learning to be a rewarding challenge. They feel confident and effective in their relationship to children. Parents need this same kind of awareness, some of the same kinds of skills and the same feeling of confidence. While teachers are trained to provide an effective education for children,

parents are mostly left to their own resources. They do the best they can with the experiences they have had.

During the early sixties many innovative program developers began to recognize the important role that parents play in the education of their children. They saw that parents were effective teacher assistants and volunteers in the school setting. They also recognized that parents are in need of information about child growth and development and that parents need opportunities to improve their parenting skills. Performance standards (objectives) were developed in Headstart and Day Care programs specifically for the education and involvement of parents. Programs that included a parental component showed more gains in the education of their children than programs that did not include a parental component. Parent involvement components are now an essential part of Headstart and Day Care program. Parents serve as teacher aides, volunteers, advisory members, policy members, and developers of parenting curriculums.

The education of parents for parenting is of crucial importance in the world in which we live. Technological changes and advances have greatly increased the amount of knowledge that must be learned. Instant world wide communication has increased the problems that must be dealt with. Sociological changes in the family structure, in values and in cultural awareness have created much uncertainty and sometimes resistance. It has been said that the world today changes so quickly it is difficult for one to get one's bearings. All of this increases the difficulty of being a parent.

If educators are going to be successful in their role as facilitators of learning, they must help parents be successful in their role as educators of their children, they must involve parents in the learning process. Working together, parents and teachers make a powerful team.

WORKING WITH PARENTS

Parents do not automatically become partners with you in the education of their children. While some more assertive parents will come forward and volunteer or make suggestions, the majority will not. As a teacher of young children you need to develop skills in working cooperatively with parents. Although you may be in a program where a designated person has major responsibility for parent education and parent involvement activities, you will need to learn how to identify teaching skills parents have, you will need to involve parents in classroom experiences where these skills can be used effectively, help parents solve problems regarding their child, confer with them when problems arise, and establish a good understanding of the parent-child relationship.

To do this successfully you need to value parents and to develop a good understanding of how to work with parents. The following guidelines will help you enhance your skills in working with parents. To work successfully with parents you will need:

1. Establish a trustworthy relationship with parents. Have you ever tried to talk to someone that you didn't really know or feel comfortable with? Did you talk about a problem or how you were really feeling? Chances are you did not. We usually do not confide in persons we don't know or trust to understand us. In order for a parent to be able to communicate with you he will have to feel that he can trust you. A feeling of trust is built upon mutual acceptance and respect and a genuine feeling of caring for each other as human beings.

Before you can begin to work effectively with parents you must establish a trustworthy relationship with them. This can be done by contacting parents and letting them know how important they are, by pointing out good things they are doing, by inviting them to participate in specific activities where their skills can be helpful to you, and by letting them know that you can and are ready to help them. Your sincerity is most important. Don't try to snow parents because they will see right through you.

Make a list of things that you can do to begin establishing a trustworthy relationship with the parents of the children in your classroom. Be specific.

2. Create a warm and accepting environment for parent conferences. Almost every parent who has had to go to school to talk about his child's performance or behavior will tell you that he felt most anxious. There is something very threatening about talking to the teacher of your child. As parents we feel insecure about how well we've done as parents. We feel very much a part of our child. It is almost as if we are being judged. If you, as a teacher, will remember this when you set up a parent conference, you can plan the meeting in such a way that parents will feel comfortable and less anxious. It is essential that the atmosphere of the meeting be warm and accepting. If parents feel comfortable they will be less defensive and will participate more in the meeting.

You can create a warm and accepting environment by letting parents know how much you appreciate their coming. It is not always easy for parents to make

arrangements to come to school. You can recognize some positive strengths of the parent and child before talking about any problem areas. You can ask the parent for advice concerning their child. After all, a parent knows his child in a way that you as a teacher cannot. This also lets the parent know that you value his opinion. Conduct the meeting in an informal manner. Sitting together on a couch, or in chairs next to each other is less threatening than a teacher sitting behind a desk. Prior conferences with parents about positive events will make conferences about problems easier. Also, home visits made before parents come to school to discuss problems will help you establish a warm and accepting environment.

Name some things you can do to create a warm and accepting environment in your parent conferences.

3. Make the content of parent meetings experience-centered and relevant to known needs. Have you ever attended a meeting where little, if any, of the information presented was of concern to you or where you really didn't understand what was being said, because it was not related to your background of experience? It was very boring and a waste of your time, wasn't it? Too many meetings for parents cover information that is not relevant to their needs or related to their background of experience.

When you plan a meeting for parents (individual or group), be sure that what is to be discussed will be of importance to them. This can be determined by talking with parents personally, by sending home simple questionnaires, by group

discussions at information gathering meetings, etc. Present the information using examples from the parents experiences. This is especially important where there are parents from various cultural backgrounds. For example, if you are talking about nutrition in the home, include food items from the various cultures involved. There is good nutritional value in foods other than those traditionally included on food charts. If you are talking about ways of teaching children in the home, include ways that are culturally relevant. For example, Mexican-American mothers tend to use modeling as a way of teaching. They also tend to encourage cooperative activities vs. competitive activities. Mexican-American mothers frequently personalize experiences and are usually warm and supportive of the young child during an activity or interaction. These modes of teaching should be utilized and strengthened. When you utilize strengths and skills that parents already have, you are saying to them, I value what you can do. This is a beautiful way to build a "team" relationship.

4. Organize information so that it is meaningful and easily learned.

It is not only important for information to be given to parents to be relevant, it must also be organized in such a way that it makes sense to them. Whether the information is to be given individually or in a group setting, how it is organized is very important. Have you ever gone to a meeting where the speaker or speakers jumped from one thing to another in such a way that you were left confused? When information is not organized in a meaningful way, that's what happens.

How can you organize information meaningfully? First, decide what needs to be communicated. Then, decide the order that makes most sense. Once you have decided on the order that you will present the information, think about how

you can include some repetition of points. Repetition plays an important role in learning. However, repetition of important points needs to be in different contexts. In other words, you need to say the same thing in different ways, using different examples. People sometimes misunderstand. Repetition allows for the clearing up of confusion. For example, in a parent conference you may have stated that "Jose" has difficulty working together with other children and given several examples. A little later in the conversation you might repeat the information giving other examples. This will help the parent see that Jose's difficulty involves more than the first examples given. It may also help get across more specifically the kind of behavior you are talking about. Repetition helps parents gain new insights and apply the information to their own situation.

Another technique that is helpful is the frequent summing up of what has been discussed. This too, helps parents make gains in knowledge and insight.

Look in the resource section, page 30, of this module. Select some information that you want to give to a small group of parents. Write a three to four page paper of the information as you will present it to the parents. Include your own examples, decide where and how you will include repetition of ideas and the summing up of points.

5. Provide a social setting for group meetings. As already mentioned, going to your child's school can be a very threatening situation. This is particularly true of minority parents who have not previously been a part of the school culture. Experience has shown that these parents feel more comfortable

when the setting is informal rather than formal. There appears to be more participation when the first part of the meeting involves getting acquainted and the serving of refreshment "una merienda o tamalada." Social settings seem to help parents get rid of their anxiousness and reluctance to participate.

A part of providing a social setting is the inclusion of activities that give parents an opportunity to talk to each other and to the group. Games, role playing, group discussions, demonstrations, etc., all allow for individual participation. These kinds of experiences are essential to effective participation by everyone.

A personal invitation usually results in greater attendance. Again, this is particularly true of minority parents. Perhaps the personal invitation makes them feel that they really are wanted at the meeting. A printed note can be very cold and easy to ignore. A handwritten note with a personal touch or a phone call can make a parent feel very special.

Write out a personal invitation to a parent of a child in your classroom, in the language the parent understands. Invite the parent to a parent meeting. You may wish to include the child in the invitation. After you have written the note, evaluate what makes the note personal other than it was handwritten.

6. Give parents practical suggestions for helping their child learn at home. Most parents want to help their child learn but often feel they do not know how. As a teacher there are several things that you can do to help parents teach their child at home. One, is to make them aware of their role as teachers of their children. Point out all of the things that they have taught their child e.g., how to walk, feed himself, talk, get along with others, do things for himself, behave according to their values, etc. Have the parents name some new things that they can teach their child, such as the names for objects, colors, shapes, how to set the table, how to dress, how to tie shoes, how to prepare simple food items like sandwiches, tacos, toast, etc., how to put away belongings, etc.

A second thing, is to prepare and give parents materials to use in teaching their child a specific task. For example, if "Roberto" is having trouble learning to match colors, prepare some sets of color cards in two or three colors. Write out in the parents primary language some simple directions for using the cards. Also include suggestions for using and suggestion materials in the home to teach the matching of colors. Then, make a home visit and show the parent how to use the materials. This will give the parent a feeling that you really care about his child. It will also help the parent to feel good about himself. The written directions will help the parent remember if help is needed after you leave.

A third thing you can do to help parents is to give them specific suggestions for things to do with their child. For example, you might suggest something like this, "Mrs. Juarez, we are learning about the names of things we wear. You could help Jaime a lot if you would have him name the clothes he is wearing as

he dresses and undresses each day. You can also have him name the clothes you and other family members are wearing. I know you can help Jaime learn this and I think you and Jaime will have fun doing this together."

A fourth thing, is to give parents information about teaching their child while doing daily tasks. Many parents see teaching as something that they must sit down and do. Demonstrate how teaching can occur while making tortillas, folding clothes, preparing dinner, bathing baby, etc. This may require a home visit, but it can be beneficial to both parents and child. Group meetings also lend themselves to demonstrations on ways of teaching. Group discussion and sharing can be very valuable and useful to parents.

A fifth thing, is to give parents materials that they can read to their child. Since we know that children whose parents frequently read to them tend to do better in language and reading, it is our responsibility as educators to encourage parents to read to their child. Perhaps a list of appropriate books in English and Spanish, that can be checked out of the local public library will be helpful. Parents need to be made aware of how important it is for them to read to their child. Parents who do not have easy access to appropriate reading materials may need some help from you. If you have parents who do not read, you may wish to refer them to an adult literacy group so that they can develop the skill of reading.

Make a list of other things that you as a teacher can do to help parents teach their children at home.

Prepare a packet of materials for a parent to use at home to teach a specific task.

7. Provide opportunities for parents to work and learn together. Much learning takes place in a group situation where thoughts, feelings and questions are shared. Group parent workshops are just as important as individual conferences. Group meetings help parents see that others have the same problems and needs that they do. They also help parents see their strengths.

Group workshops can be planned around common problems and needs, e.g., getting playground equipment for the school. They can be planned around the sharing of information that parents need, e.g., nutrition, health, behavior, helping children learn, child growth and development, etc. They can be planned around instruction. Parents need to be effective teacher assistants in the classroom; or they can be planned as workshops where parents make instructional materials to be used in the classroom.

Parents can play a vital role in a pre-school classroom. There are many tasks that they can assist you with. The effort you spend in planning and conducting group meetings can bring you many benefits.

1. Make a list of topics and/or situations you would discuss with a parent individually.
2. Make a list of topics and/or situations you would discuss with a small group of parents (five to ten).
3. Make a list of topics and/or situations you would discuss with a large group of parents (fifteen or more).

Plan a meeting for a small group of parents. Write your objective for the meeting, materials you will need, and what information you will give the parents. Identify information that is culturally relevant to a culturally different group. Use the following outline.

When you have finished, discuss your plan with your trainer or academic instructor.

A. Meeting Objectives:

B. Materials Needed:

C. Information to be Presented:

RESOURCE INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

As a teacher of young children you will need to give information to parents on different topics. Some parents may need help in obtaining medical services, others may need help in dealing with their children's behavior, still others may need to learn how to talk and read to their children in ways that will improve learning, etc. You will need to be prepared to meet parents' needs. The following section provides some resource information on different topics to help you be better prepared. Study the information carefully so that you will be able to help parents as various needs arise.

Helping Children Learn at Home

Many parents are not aware that they play such an important role in teaching their children. In some instances it will be necessary for you to explain this role to parents. The role of parents as teachers was discussed in the first part of this module. You can use that information to help parents understand their role as teachers. However, you will need to give parents specific things to do at home with their children. Speaking generally about their importance as teachers will not help parents learn how to do a better job of helping their children learn at home.

When helping parents teach their children at home, be sure to include techniques that are culturally relevant. For example, as discussed earlier, many Mexican-American parents model for their children when they are teaching them something new. Many Mexican American parents personalize stories and situations to make them more meaningful and relevant. They also tend to be warm and supportive with their children, although respect for authority and elders is expected and

demanded. Grandparents, aunts and uncles give encouragement and support within the extended family structure, which is typical of many Mexican-American families. These persons may also be included in home learning activities. A cooperative environment is usually encouraged within the home, rather than a competitive environment. Making your explanations and ways of teaching culturally relevant will make it easier for parents to work with their children and with you.

The following information will help parents help their children learn at home:

Talk To Your Child

WHY: When you talk to your child you help him learn about things around him, you help him understand his feelings and you help him learn to talk. You also learn to enjoy and understand your child.

WHEN: Any time is a good time to talk to your child. You can talk to your child when....

- doing dishes
- preparing food
- sweeping the floor
- cooking tortillas
- cleaning the yard
- shopping
- fixing something broken
- bathing baby
- eating meals
- dresssing the child
- walking or driving
- preparing for bed, etc.

ABOUT WHAT: Talk about.....

"this is a big blue ball"

"lemons taste sour"

"this cloth feels smooth"

"glasses break when dropped"

"the stove feels hot when it is on"

"your shoes have mud on them"

"there is a hole in your sock"

"tortillas are round," etc.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING

"I am peeling the potatoes"

"The rice is cooking soon it will be soft and ready to eat"

"I am folding the clothes. When I finish I will put them away.

Would you like to help me fold and put the clothes away?"

"These beans must be cleaned before I cook them. Would you like to help?"

PROBLEMS THAT NEED TO BE SOLVED

"The milk spilled on the table and the floor."

"How can we clean it up?"

"Your dress is too short. We can make it longer by putting the hem down."

HOW THINGS WORK

"The stem goes in the coffee pot like this, then the basket fits on it like this."

"Look how I push the needle through the cloth. Now watch the needle come back through the cloth. See! I made a stitch

"Watch how I move the piedra to grind the onion."

PLANS YOU ARE MAKING

"After we eat we are going to the store. You can help me shop for some fruit and cookies."

"Tomorrow we will go visit abuelita."

"You can help me prepare supper. What would you like to fix."

"This morning we will clean the house. You can pick up the toys and help me carry out the trash," etc.

SOMETHING YOU'VE ALREADY DONE

"What did we do when we went to Tia Rachel's?"

"Swimming at the park yesterday was fun. What else did you do that was fun?"

"Tell me all of the things I put in the tortilla dough?"

"How did we make the tortillas round?"

FEELINGS

"You're feeling sad because you can't play outside."

"I know you're angry at your brother but you can't hit him."

"You're missing abuelita. We will go to see her tomorrow."

"You're happy because we're going on a picnic."

"Javier, I'm feeling very angry because you did that."

Listen to Your Child

WHY: When you listen to your child you can better understand what he knows and how he feels. Listening helps you to build a good relationship with your child.

WHEN: Listen to your child anytime he talks to you. Try not to be too busy when your child has something to say. Some important times to listen are when your child.....

is upset

feels sad

asks you a question

is angry

is excited

comes to you for comfort

feels involved

feels disappointed

is loving

tells you about something

HOW: Listen with your eyes.

Look at your child. Let him know that you are interested in what is being said even if it doesn't seem important to you. It is to your child.

Listen with your ears.

Really listen to what your child is saying. It will tell you how he is feeling, what he knows or doesn't know, what he likes or doesn't say may also be important.

Listen with your heart.

Your child will know when you are pretending to listen or pretend to be interested in what he is saying. Your child is very special. Let him know that you really care about him and that you value him as a person.

Read or Tell "Cuentos" To Your Child

WHY: Reading or telling stories to your child will help him learn to talk and to listen to words and sounds. It will also help him learn to read faster and more easily. Telling "cuentos" or stories is an important way of helping children learn about their culture. It will also help them learn family history. Reading to your child lets him know that you think reading is important and it will help him learn to enjoy reading.

WHEN: Read to your child regularly whenever you have time to sit down and give the child your full attention. This may be before bedtime, or anytime that works for you. When possible personalize the story. Use names of persons familiar to the child. Relate events in the story to experiences the child has had.

HOW: One to Two year olds.

Read a book with big pictures of familiar things.

Let the child point to pictures and you name them, or you point to pictures and have him name them.

Tell the story simply describing the actions in the pictures.

Stop reading when the child loses interest.

Two to Three year olds.

Read short simple stories about familiar things.

Ask the child about things in the pictures.

Have the child repeat words or phrases that he likes.

Read stories that have funny sounds and things that make noises such as trains, animals or cars.

Three to Four year olds.

Read stories about boys and girls, animals and things outside the home.

Read stories that have a simple sequence of events. Children this age like to guess what will happen next.

Read stories that have repetitions of sounds and rhymes.

Ask questions about what's happening.

Read the same stories over again. Children learn something new each time.

Four to Five year olds.

Read stories that have more words and more details.

Read stories about people and things in the community like the grocer, fireman or doctor.

Read stories that tell how things work and why certain things happen.

Read make-believe stories about things that act like real people.

Read or tell stories that reflect your culture, such as a visit to the "curandero" or a tortilla factory.

Stop reading when the child becomes restless or disinterested.

Five to Six year olds.

Read stories that help your child understand the world.

Read longer stories that have more words.

Read stories with more difficult plots.

Have your child retell the story or tell what might happen next.

Ask your child questions as you read the story.

Read stories with rhymes.

Read make-believe and fantasy stories.

Use Things in the Home to Teach Your Child

WHY: Much learning takes place in the home, while using things found in the home. Ordinary home activities and materials provide some of the most important opportunities for learning. You do not need to buy toys to help your children learn. Use what you have in your home already.

WHAT: Use home materials like.....

unbreakable dishes

silverware

washcloths and towels

coffe pots

food items like apples, potatoes, rice, beans

tortilla press

water

clothes

shoe laces

thread spools

empty food cans

buttons

old socks

scraps of fabric

dirt or sand

HOW: The child can....

1. Pour rice, beans, water, etc. from cup to cup to develop pouring skills.
2. Count the number of persons who will eat and then matching number of plates to develop counting skills.

3. Put all of the plates together, the cups together, saucers together to develop classification skills.
4. Name each dish to develop language skills.
5. Name the color, shape and size (big or little) of each dish to develop language and cognitive skills.
6. Talk about the shape of the "masa" as it is pressed in the tortilla press.

(Silverware) The child can...

1. Put all of the forks together, the spoons together, the knives together to develop classification skills.
2. Name each kind of silverware (e.g., spoon fork) to develop language skills.
3. Describe how to use each kind of silverware to develop cognitive skills.

(Washcloths and Towels) The child can...

1. Separate by color to develop color discrimination.
2. Name the color of each towel and washcloth to develop language and cognitive skills.
3. Fold them after washing to develop fine motor skills.
4. Name the sizes (e.g., small, medium large) to develop cognitive skills.

(Food Items like Apples & Potatoes) The child can.....

1. Name the item to develop language skills.
2. Name the color to develop language and cognitive skills.
3. Describe how it tasted to develop language and cognitive skills.
4. Describe ways of eating them to develop language and cognitive skills.
5. Describe how to prepare them for eating (e.g., cutting, peeling, coring, etc.) to develop language and cognitive skills.

(Food Items like Apples & Potatoes)

The child can....

1. Name the item to develop language skills.
2. Name the color to develop language and cognitive skills.
3. Describe how it tasted to develop language and cognitive skills.
4. Describe ways of eating them to develop language and cognitive skills.
5. Describe how to prepare them for eating (eg., cutting, peeling, coring, etc.) to develop language and cognitive skills.

(Food Items like Beans & Rice) The child can....

1. Name the item to develop language skills.
2. Pour them from container to container to develop motor and cognitive skills.
3. Describe ways of cooking them to develop language and cognitive skills.
4. Describe how they feel before and after cooking to develop language and cognitive skills.

(Water) The child can.....

1. Explore how it feels and what can be done with it to develop cognitive skills.
2. Can pour it from container to container to develop motor skills.
3. Discover things that float and things that do not float to develop cognitive skills.

(Clothes) The child can.....

1. Dress and undress to develop motor and cognitive skills.
2. Name various clothing items to develop language skills.
3. Button, zip, snap and tie to develop motor skills.
4. Fold and unfold items to develop motor skills.
5. Separate clothing by color, size and type of clothing to develop cognitive skills.

(Shoe Laces) The child can.....

1. String large macaroni and thread spools to develop fine motor skills.
2. Lace through shoe eyes to develop motor skills.
3. Tie bows to develop fine motor skills.

(Empty Food Cans) The child can.....

1. Stack them by size to develop cognitive skills.
2. Separate them into groups by size to develop cognitive skills.
3. Put small objects in them in groups by size, shape, color e.g, blue buttons in one can and red buttons in another can

(Buttons) The child can.....

1. Separate them by size and color to develop cognitive skills.
2. Paste them on paper to make designs to develop fine motor skills.
3. Count the number of buttons in a group to develop counting skills.

(Boxes) The child can.....

1. Stack them by size to develop cognitive skills.
2. Put things in them and take them out to develop fine motor skills.

(Old Socks) The child can.....

1. Separate them by color and size to develop cognitive skills.
2. Make hand puppets with them and use them to develop language skills.

(Scraps of Fabric) The child can....

1. Separate them by color to develop cognitive skills.
2. Cut shapes and patterns to develop fine motor skills.
3. Paste pieces onto paper to make pictures to develop fine motor skills and creativity.
4. Use them for doll clothing and dress up clothing to develop creativity.

(Dirt or Sand) The child can.....

1. Pour it from container to container to develop fine motor skills.
2. Mix it with water and make make-believe items to develop fine motor skills and creativity.

NUTRITION

Every human being needs foods that provide the body with nutrients that are required to maintain well being. The essential nutrients are carbohydrates, fats, protein, vitamins, minerals and water. Whenever the body receives an inadequate amount of any of these nutrients a nutritional deficiency results. Good nutrition is essential for normal development of the body, for normal reproduction and maintenance, for optimum activity level and working efficiency, for resistance to infection and disease, and for the ability to repair bodily damage or injury. Since no single nutrient will maintain optimum health, it is essential that adequate amounts of each nutrient are included in the daily diet.

Research has shown that children who receive inadequate diets are more likely to become ill and will have more difficulty recovering from illnesses. These children are also more likely to develop physically a slower rate and have more difficulty learning.

As a teacher of young children you will need to be aware of any nutritional deficiencies the children may have. If a child seems to be ill frequently, is listless and has difficulty concentrating, refer the child for a physical examination. You may also need to talk with the parents about the importance of a good diet. If the parents are Mexican-American you will need to be familiar with the kinds of food served in the home and their nutritional value.

The following chart shows the food composition of some typical foods eaten by Mexican-American children at home. These foods are just as nutritious as those typically suggested in food charts as being nutritious breakfast, lunch or dinner foods. Familiarize yourself with their nutrient value. Be sure to include these as recommended foods when you talk to parents.

MINIMUM DAILY REQUIRED NUTRIENTS

	1 - 3 yrs.	4 - 6 yrs.
Calories required for light activity	1100	1600
Carbohydrates	165.0 g.	240.0 g.
Fats.....	38 g.	58 g.
Protein.....	23 g.	30 g.
Calcium.....	800 mg.	800 mg.
Iron.....	15 mg.	10 mg.
Vitamin A	2000 IU	2500 IU
Vitamin C	40 mg.	40 mg.
Thiamin (B ₁)	0.7 mg.	0.9 mg.
Riboflavin (B ₂)	0.8 mg.	1.1 mg.
Niacin	9.0 mg.	12.0 mg.
Calcium	800.0 mg.	800.0 mg.

Kirschman, John D. Nutrition Almanac. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1973.

TABLE OF ETHNIC FOOD COMPOSITION

FOOD ITEM	PORTION	CALORIES	FAT (gm)	CARBOHYD (gm)	PROTEIN (gm)	VIT. A (IU)	VIT. C (mg)	THI (B ₁) (mg)	RIB (B ₂) (mg)	NIACIN (mg)	CALCIUM (mg)	IRON (mg)
Arroz	1/2 cup	112	0.1	24.8	2.1	-	-	0.11	0.07	1.0	10	0.9
*Atole de Avena (1/2 cup avena, 1 cup milk, 1 tsp. sugar)	1 cup	225	9.1	26.6	9.7	250	4	0.20	0.50	0.3	315	0.8
*Atole de Maiz (1 cup masa de maiz, 3 cup milk, 1 tsp. sugar)	1 cup	219	8.02	21.25	7.95	250	4	.112	.485	.26	304.5	.22
Avena	1/2 cup	66	1.2	11.6	2.4	-	-	0.10	0.02	0.1	11	0.7
Azucar	1 tsp.	14	-	3.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bolillo	1	156	1.6	29.8	4.9	Trace	Trace	0.20	0.12	1.7	24	1.2
Caldo de Pollo con fideo	1 cup	59	1.8	7.5	3.2	45	Trace	0.02	0.02	0.7	9	0.5
Camote (baked)	1	78	0.3	17.9	1.2	4455	12	0.05	0.04	0.4	22	0.5
Cebollas	1/2 cup	30	0.1	6.8	1.3	-	7	0.03	0.03	-	25	0.4
Chile con Carne y Frijoles	1 cup	333	15.3	30.5	18.8	150	-	0.08	0.18	3.3	80	4.3
Chocolate	3/4 cup	182	8.6	20.4	7.1	300	2	0.08	0.34	0.4	221	0.8
Chorizo	1 oz.	135	12.5	Trace	5.1	-	-	.22	.1	1.1	-	.7

National Dairy Council, 1974

* Adapted

TABLE OF ETHNIC FOOD COMPOSITION

FOOD ITEM	PORTION	CALORIES	FAT (gm)	CARBOHYD (gm)	PROTEIN (gm)	VIT. A (IU)	VIT. C (mg)	THI (B ₁) (mg)	RIB (B ₂) (mg)	NIACIN (mg)	CALCIUM (mg)	IRON (mg)
Chuleta de Puerco	3 oz	308	24.2	-	20.8	-	-	0.82	0.24	4.9	9	2.7
Cocido de Res con Vegetales	1/2 cup	209	10.1	14.6	15.0	2303	16	0.14	0.16	4.5	28	2.8
Crema Agria	1 Tbsp	25	2.0	1.0	Trace	100	-	-	0.02	-	12	-
Empanada de Manzana	1	403	17.5	60.0	3.5	47	2	0.15	0.13	1.7	13	1.1
*Fideo	1/2 cup	100	1.2	18.6	3.3	56	-	0.11	0.06	1.0	8	0.7
Flan	1/2 cup	152	7.3	14.7	7.2	464	Trace	0.05	0.25	0.1	148	0.5
Frijoles Refritos	1/2 cup	142	0.09	26.16	8.85	-	-	-	-	-	45	-
Gucumole	1 lg.	361	33.0	12.0	4.54	626	2.3	0.240	0.43	3.46	22	1.3
*Huevos con Chorizo	1 lg. 1 oz.	246	20.8	1.5	12.3	691	-	.27	.3	1.2	51	1.8
*Huevos con Papas	1 lg. 2	188	8.4	19.2	9.5	691	-	.16	.22	1.6	51	1.7
Leche	1 cup	145	7.9	11.3	7.3	250	4	0.10	0.48	0.2	304	0.1
Lechuga	2 leaves	9	0.2	1.8	0.7	950	9	0.03	0.04	0.2	34	0.7
Maiz	1/2 cup	70	0.7	16.4	2.2	291	3	0.02	0.04	0.8	4	0.4
Mantequilla	1 tsp.	36	4.1	Trace	Trace	165	-	-	-	-	-	-

National Dairy Council, 1974

* Adapted

TABLE OF ETHNIC FOOD COMPOSITION

FOOD ITEM	PORTION	CALORIES	FAT (gm)	CARBOHYD (gm)	PROTEIN (gm)	VIT. A (IU)	VIT. C (mg)	THI (B ₁) (mg)	RIB (B ₂) (mg)	NIACIN (mg)	CALCIUM (mg)	IRON (mg)
Melon	1/4 med.	29	0.1	7.2	0.7	3273	32	0.04	0.03	0.6	13	0.4
Pan Dulce	1	274	15.3	24.6	4.8	202	Trace	0.05	0.10	0.5	53	0.6
*Papas con Chorizo	2 1 oz.	313	21.9	21.7	7.7	-	12.65	.30	.14	2.95	10	8.0
Platano	1 med.	101	0.2	26.4	1.3	226	12	0.06	0.07	0.8	10	0.8
Queso Cheddar	1 oz.	113	9.2	0.6	6.9	237	-	-	0.10	-	202	-
*Refresco de Melon (1/2 cup melon, 1 cup Milk, 1 tsp. sugar)	1/2 cup	188	8.0	22.2	8.0	3523	36	.14	0.51	0.8	317	0.5
*Refresco de Platano (1 platano, 1 cup milk)	1 cup	260	8.1	41.4	8.6	476	16	0.16	0.55	1.0	314	0.9
Salsa Picante		17	Trace	4.1	0.4	233	2.70	0.02	0.01	0.27	3.3	0.13
Taco de Res (cooked ground beef, cheddar cheese, corn tortilla, lettuce & tomatoe)	1	216	10.1	14.7	16.9	352	4	0.10	0.19	3.0	174	2.6
Tortilla	1	63	0.6	13.5	1.5	6	-	0.04	0.02	0.3	60	0.9

National Dairy Council, 1974

* Adapted

HEALTH

Signs of Illness

As a teacher of young children it is very important that you recognize signs of illness. There may be occasions when you will need to help parents recognize when their child is ill. Some parents ignore early signs of illness. That is why children sometimes come to school ill. Listed below are some signs of illness which can easily be observed. It may be helpful if you would give this information to parents early in the year.

Signs of Illness:

1. Loss of appetite
2. Listlessness, drowsiness or unusual need for sleep.
3. Unusual or excessive moving around.
4. Irritability, unusual unwillingness to cooperate.
5. Loss of ability to balance self easily while walking or running.
6. Bedwetting after being toilet trained for a long period of time.
7. Unusual number of trips to the toilet.
8. Fever
9. Vomiting
10. Sneezing and coughing
11. Complaints of pain such as, stomach ache, headache, neck ache, leg ache.
12. Diarrhea
13. Sore throat
14. Earache
15. Rashes any place on the body.

Immunizations

Check with the health coordinator or nurse who is responsible for the health evaluations in your program to find out what immunizations are required. In all states the law requires certain immunizations. You need to know which ones are required. Although the nurse or health coordinator has responsibility for determining which children need immunizations, you may be called upon to explain to parents why the immunizations are necessary. Also some parents may have fears that the shots will be harmful to their children. Work closely with your health person so that you can help parents relieve their anxieties.

POST - TEST

1. List and explain five aspects of a parent-child relationship that have a profound effect upon the child's development.
2. Explain why parent involvement and parent education are a necessary part of pre-school education.
3. List and explain at least six guidelines or principles that will help a teacher develop skills in working with parents.
4. Outline a parent involvement program that a pre-school teacher could use for involving the parents in the classroom activities.

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